

English 3

Lesson One and Two

Note: Lessons 1 - 10 represent a unit. By the end of the unit, students will be able to answer the essential question: What factors shape our values and beliefs?

Focus: The Devil

By Guy de Maupassant

Guy de Maupassant (1850-1893) was a French writer famous for his mastery of the short story. His writing often depicts human lives and social forces in pessimistic terms. In "The Devil", Guy de Maupassant follows the last few days of the dying Mother Bontemps and the deal her son makes for her care. As you read, take notes on what motivates characters' actions throughout the story.



"Common Domestic Kratt (Krattus Krattus)" by Anita is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

[1]

The peasant was standing opposite the doctor, by the bedside of the dying old woman, and she, calmly resigned and quite lucid, looked at them and listened to their talking. She was going to die, and she did not rebel at it, for her life was over — she was ninety-two.

The July sun streamed in at the window and through the open door and cast its hot flames on to the uneven brown clay floor, which had been stamped down by four generations of clodhoppers.¹ The smell of the fields came in also, driven by the brisk wind, and parched by the noontide heat. The grasshoppers chirped themselves hoarse, filling the air with their shrill noise, like that of the wooden crickets which are sold to children at fair time. The doctor raised his voice and said: "Honore, you cannot leave your mother in this state; she may die at any moment." And the peasant, in great distress, replied: "But I must get in my wheat, for it has been lying on the ground a long time, and the weather is just right for it; what do you say about it, mother?" And the dying woman, still possessed by her Norman² avariciousness,³ replied YES with her eyes and her forehead, and so urged her son to get in his wheat, and to leave her to die alone. But the doctor got angry, and stamping his foot he said: "You are no better than a brute, do you hear, and I will not allow you to do it. Do you understand? And if you must get in your wheat to-day, go and fetch Rapet's wife and make her look after your mother. I WILL have it. And if you do not obey me, I will let you die like a dog, when you are ill in your turn; do you hear me?"

The peasant, a tall, thin fellow with slow movements, who was tormented by indecision, by his fear of the doctor and his keen love of saving, hesitated, calculated, and stammered out: "How much does La Rapet charge for attending sick people?"

"How should I know?" the doctor cried. "That depends upon how long she is wanted for. Settle it with her, by Jove!⁴ But I want her to be here within an hour, do you hear."

So the man made up his mind. "I will go for her," he replied; "don't get angry, doctor." And the latter left, calling out as he went: "Take care, you know, for I do not joke when I am angry!" And as soon as they were alone, the peasant turned to his mother, and said in a resigned voice: "I will go and fetch La Rapet, as the man will have it. Don't go off while I am away."

And he went out in his turn.

La Rapet, who was an old washerwoman, watched the dead and the dying of the neighborhood, and then, as soon as she had sewn her customers into that linen cloth from which they would emerge no more, she went and took up her irons to smooth the linen of the living. Wrinkled like a last year's apple, spiteful, envious, avaricious, with a phenomenal avarice, bent double, as if she had been broken in half across the loins, by the constant movement of the iron over the linen, one might have said that she had a kind of monstrous and cynical affection for a death struggle. She never spoke of anything but of the people she had seen die, of the various kinds of deaths at which she had been present, and she related, with the greatest minuteness, details which were always the same, just like a sportsman talks of his shots.

When Honore Bontemps entered her cottage, he found her preparing the starch for the collars of the village women, and he said: "Good evening; I hope you are pretty well, Mother Rapet."

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She turned her head round to look at him and said: "Fairly well, fairly well, and you?"

"Oh I as for me, I am as well as I could wish, but my mother is very sick."

"Your mother?"

"Yes, my mother!"

"What's the matter with her?"

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"She is going to turn up her toes, that's what's the matter with her!"

The old woman took her hands out of the water and asked with sudden sympathy: "Is she as bad as all that?"

"The doctor says she will not last till morning."

"Then she certainly is very bad!" Honore hesitated, for he wanted to make a few preliminary remarks before coming to his proposal, but as he could hit upon nothing, he made up his mind suddenly.

“How much are you going to ask to stop with her till the end? You know that I am not rich, and I cannot even afford to keep a servant-girl. It is just that which has brought my poor mother to this state, too much work and fatigue! She used to work for ten, in spite of her ninety-two years. You don't find any made of that stuff nowadays!”

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La Rapet answered gravely: “There are two prices. Forty sous⁷ by day and three francs⁸ by night for the rich, and twenty sous by day, and forty by night for the others. You shall pay me the twenty and forty.” But the peasant reflected, for he knew his mother well. He knew how tenacious of life, how vigorous and unyielding she was. He knew, too, that she might last another week, in spite of the doctor's opinion, and so he said resolutely: “No, I would rather you would fix a price until the end. I will take my chance, one way or the other. The doctor says she will die very soon. If that happens, so much the better for you, and so much the worse for me, but if she holds out till to-morrow or longer, so much the better for me and so much the worse for you!”

The nurse looked at the man in astonishment, for she had never treated a death as a speculative⁹ job, and she hesitated, tempted by the idea of the possible gain. But almost immediately she suspected that he wanted to juggle her. “I can say nothing until I have seen your mother,” she replied.

“Then come with me and see her.”

She washed her hands, and went with him immediately. They did not speak on the road; she walked with short, hasty steps, while he strode on with his long legs, as if he were crossing a brook at every step. The cows lying down in the fields, overcome by the heat, raised their heads heavily and lowed feebly at the two passers-by, as if to ask them for some green grass.

When they got near the house, Honore Bontemps murmured: “Suppose it is all over?” And the unconscious wish that it might be so showed itself in the sound of his voice.

[25]

But the old woman was not dead. She was lying on her back, on her wretched bed, her hands covered with a pink cotton counterpane,¹⁰ horribly thin, knotty paws, like some strange animal's, or like crabs' claws, hands closed by rheumatism,¹¹ fatigue, and the work of nearly a century which she had accomplished.

La Rapet went up to the bed and looked at the dying woman, felt her pulse, tapped her on the chest, listened to her breathing, and asked her questions, so as to hear her speak: then, having looked at her for some time longer, she went out of the room, followed by Honore. His decided opinion was, that the old woman would not last out the night, and he asked: "Well?" And the sick-nurse replied: "Well, she may last two days, perhaps three. You will have to give me six francs, everything included."

"Six francs! six francs!" he shouted. "Are you out of your mind? I tell you that she cannot last more than five or six hours!" And they disputed angrily for some time, but as the nurse said she would go home, as the time was slipping away, and as his wheat would not come to the farmyard of its own accord, he agreed to her terms at last:

"Very well, then, that is settled; six francs including everything, until the corpse is taken out."

"That is settled, six francs."

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And he went away, with long strides, to his wheat, which was lying on the ground under the hot sun which ripens the grain, while the sick-nurse returned to the house.

She had brought some work with her, for she worked without stopping by the side of the dead and dying, sometimes for herself, sometimes for the family, who employed her as seamstress also, paying her rather more in that capacity. Suddenly she asked:

"Have you received the last sacrament,¹² Mother Bontemps?"

The old peasant woman said "No" with her head, and La Rapet, who was very devout, got up quickly: "Good heavens, is it possible? I will go and fetch the cure"; and she rushed off to the parsonage¹³ so quickly, that the urchins in the street thought some accident had happened, when they saw her trotting off like that.

The priest came immediately in his surplice,¹⁴ preceded by a choir-boy, who rang a bell to announce the passage of the Host¹⁵ through the parched and quiet country. Some men, working at a distance, took off their large hats and remained motionless until the white vestment¹⁶ had disappeared behind some farm buildings; the women who were making up the sheaves stood up to make the sign of the cross; the frightened black hens ran away along the ditch until they reached a well-known hole through which they suddenly disappeared, while a foal, which was tied up in a meadow, took fright at the sight of the surplice and began to gallop round at the length of its rope, kicking violently. The choir-boy, in his red cassock, walked quickly, and the priest, the square biretta on his bowed head, followed him, muttering some prayers. Last of all came La Rapet, bent almost double, as if she wished to prostrate¹⁷ herself; she walked with folded hands, as if she were in church.

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Honore saw them pass in the distance, and he asked: "Where is our priest going to?" And his man, who was more acute, replied: "He is taking the sacrament to your mother, of course!"

The peasant was not surprised and said: "That is quite possible," and went on with his work.

Mother Bontemps confessed, received absolution¹⁸ and extreme unction, and the priest took his departure, leaving the two women alone in the suffocating cottage. La Rapet began to look at the dying woman, and to ask herself whether it could last much longer.

The day was on the wane, and a cooler air came in stronger puffs, making a view of Epinal, which was fastened to the wall by two pins, flap up and down. The scanty window curtains, which had formerly been white, but were now yellow and covered with fly-specks, looked as if they were going to fly off, and seemed to struggle to get away, like the old woman's soul.

Lying motionless, with her eyes open, the old mother seemed to await the death which was so near, and which yet delayed its coming; with perfect indifference. Her short breath whistled in her throat. It would stop altogether soon, and there would be one woman less in the world, one whom nobody would regret.

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At nightfall Honore returned, and when he went up to the bed and saw that his mother was still alive he asked: "How is she?" just as he had done formerly, when she had been sick. Then he sent La Rapet away, saying to her: "To-morrow morning at five o'clock, without fail." And she replied: "To-morrow at five o'clock."

She came at daybreak, and found Honore eating his soup, which he had made himself, before going to work.

"Well, is your mother dead?" asked the nurse.

"She is rather better, on the contrary," he replied, with a malignant¹⁹ look out of the corner of his eyes. Then he went out.

La Rapet was seized with anxiety, and went up to the dying woman, who was in the same state, lethargic and impassive, her eyes open and her hands clutching the counterpane. The nurse perceived that this might go on thus for two days, four days, eight days, even, and her avaricious mind was seized with fear. She was excited to fury against the cunning fellow who had tricked her, and against the woman who would not die.

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Nevertheless, she began to sew and waited with her eyes fixed on the wrinkled face of Mother Bontemps. When Honore returned to breakfast he seemed quite satisfied, and even in a bantering humor, for he was carrying in his wheat under very favorable circumstances.

La Rapet was getting exasperated; every passing minute now seemed to her so much time and money stolen from her. She felt a mad inclination to choke this old ass, this headstrong old fool, this obstinate²⁰ old wretch--to stop that short, rapid breath, which was robbing her of her time and money, by squeezing her throat a little. But then she reflected on the danger of doing so, and other thoughts came into her head, so she went up to the bed and said to her: "Have you ever seen the Devil?"

Mother Bontemps whispered: "No."

Then the sick-nurse began to talk and to tell her tales likely to terrify her weak and dying mind. "Some minutes before one dies the Devil appears," she said, "to all. He has a broom in his hand, a saucepan on his head and he utters loud cries. When anybody had seen him, all was over, and that person had only a few moments longer to live"; and she enumerated all those to whom the Devil had appeared that year: Josephine Loisel, Eulalie Ratier, Sophie Padagnau, Seraphine Grospiéd.

Mother Bontemps, who was at last most disturbed in mind, moved about, wrung her hands, and tried to turn her head to look at the other end of the room. Suddenly La Rapet disappeared at the foot of the bed. She took a sheet out of the cupboard and wrapped herself up in it; then she put the iron pot on to her head, so that its three short bent feet rose up like horns, took a broom in her right hand and a tin pail in her left, which she threw up suddenly, so that it might fall to the ground noisily.

[50]

Certainly when it came down, it made a terrible noise. Then, climbing on to a chair, the nurse showed herself, gesticulating²¹ and uttering shrill cries into the pot which covered her face, while she menaced the old peasant woman, who was nearly dead, with her broom.

Terrified, with a mad look on her face, the dying woman made a superhuman effort to get up and escape; she even got her shoulders and chest out of bed; then she fell back with a deep sigh. All was over, and La Rapet calmly put everything back into its place; the broom into the corner by the cupboard, the sheet inside it, the pot on to the hearth, the pail on to the floor, and the chair against the wall. Then with a professional air, she closed the dead woman's enormous eyes, put a plate on the bed and poured some holy water into it, dipped the twig of boxwood into it, and kneeling down, she fervently repeated the prayers for the dead, which she knew by heart, as a matter of business.

When Honore returned in the evening, he found her praying. He calculated immediately that she had made twenty sous out of him, for she had only spent three days and one night there, which made five francs altogether, instead of the six which he owed her.

"The Devil" by Guy de Maupassant (1903) is in the public domain

What Students are Learning:

Students are reading a fictional story called *The Devil*. Students will understand the themes of

Death, Mortality, and Power and Greed. Students will examine and attempt to answer the questions: “Does money buy happiness?”, “How do people face death?”, and “why do people do bad things?”

Standards Work:

Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the themes; provide an objective summary of the text.

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author’s implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

Evaluate how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college- and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

Background and Context:

The short stories of writer Guy de Maupassant detail many aspects of French life in the 19th century. Guy de Maupassant is famous for his short stories, which paint a fascinating picture of French life in the 19th century. He was prolific, publishing over 300 short stories and six novels, but died at a young age after ongoing struggles with both physical and mental health.

Guy de Maupassant’s “The Devil” story shows that hardship causes individuals to engage in extreme actions. To this end, in a bid to prevent loss of money, La Rapet hastens the death of Mother Bontemps. Likewise, to make ends meet, the ninety-two-year-old Mother Bontemps works for ten hours every day. Similarly, poverty causes Honore Bontemps to wish that Mother Bontemps dies in not more than three days.

Supports for Learning:

- Word Study:

1. Clodhoppers: large heavy shoes
2. Norman: refers to people partly descended from Norse Vikings who settled in Normandy, France

3. **Avariciousness** (*noun*) : quality of being greedy
4. **Jove**: an expression used to show surprise or emphasis
5. **Avaricious** (*adjective*) : having or showing extreme greed for wealth
6. **Minuteness** (*noun*) : attention to even the smallest detail
7. **Sous**: a former French coin of little value
8. **Francs**: the primary unit of currency in France before the adoption of the Euro
9. **Speculative** (*adjective*) : involving a high risk of loss
10. **Counterpane**: a bedspread
11. **Rheumatism**: many disease marked by inflammation and pain in the joints, muscles, or connective tissue
12. **Sacrament**: the last prayers given shortly before death during a Christian ceremony, sometimes known as the Anointing of the Sick or Last Rites
13. **Parsonage**: a house provided for an employee of the church
14. **Surplice**: a religious garment of loose white linen, worn by some prominent leaders of the Christian Church
15. **Host**: bread used in the Christian sacrament of the Eucharist offered during the last sacrament
16. **Vestment**: a ceremonial robe worn by the clergy
17. **Prostrate** (*verb*) : to lay oneself flat on the ground, face downward
18. **Absolution**: to be formally released from guilt and receive forgiveness of sins
19. **Malignant** (*adjective*) : feeling or showing ill will or hatred
20. **Obstinate** (*adjective*) : stubborn; not easily controlled or overcome
21. **Gesticulate** (*verb*) : to use dramatic gestures

- While reading think about:
 - How does personal hardship connect to the theme of the story?
 - How does the plot of the story develop? How is plot impacted by the character's actions?
 - How does the concept of money connected to the theme of the story?

Online Resources for Students:

Video:

[The Devil: An Audi Book](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXq7L0rZzOw>

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Tic-Tac-Toe Choice Board: *The Devil*

Directions: Read *The Devil*. Choose **4** activities from the choice board below. You should complete at least two activities from each **row**.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| R O W 1 | Activity 1 | Activity 2 | Activity 3 |
| | How are the peasants actions shaped by the concept of money and social status. Cite evidence from the text to support your answer. | Write a summary of <i>The Devil</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe in your summary how money and status impacted both the actions of the peasant and the doctor. Cite evidence from the text to support your claims. | Word Study: Review the critical vocabulary from the text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a sentence for eight of the identified words listed under word study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The sentences are to be grade appropriate and use at least eight words in each sentence |
| R O W 2 | Activity 4 | Activity 5 | Activity 6 |
| | Make a connection: Write an informational essay explaining how the peasant views his mother and how he views her passing. Cite evidence from the text to support your claims. | Even though the La Rapet and Honore disagree throughout the story, describe what perspective they have in common. How does this commonality, in spite of their disagreements, develop the theme of the story? | Questions Connections: Create and answer ten questions connected to the text. The questions should provide others with key information connected to the text. |

Lesson Three and Four

Focus: *When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be*

By John Keats

John Keats (1795-1821) was an English Romantic poet, whose reputation grew after his death. Likewise, this poem, though written in 1818, was first published posthumously in 1848. It is a sonnet written in iambic pentameter, with three quatrains and a couplet. **As you read, take notes on the poem's theme and how the structure contributes to the poem's overall meaning.**



"John Keats" by William Hinton is in the public domain.

[1]

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned¹ my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd² books, in charactery,³
Hold like rich garner⁴ the full ripened grain;

[5]

When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows with the magic hand of chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,

[10]

That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think

Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be by John Keats (written 1818; published 1848) is in the public domain.

What Students are Learning:

Students are reading the poem *When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be*. Students will understand the themes of Death and Fear & Paranoia as they relate to the text. Students will examine and attempt to answer the questions: "How does fear drive action?" and "How do people face death?"

Standards Work:

Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the themes; provide an objective summary of the text.

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

Evaluate how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college- and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of literature that reflect a variety of genres in the respective major periods of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

Background and Context:

"When I Have Fears" is an Elizabethan sonnet by the English Romantic poet John Keats. The 14-line poem is written in iambic pentameter (a beat or foot that uses 10 syllables in each line) and consists of three quatrains (three lines) and a couplet (two lines).

Written in 1818, this poem expresses concerns that run through his poetry and his

letters--fame, love, and time. Keats was conscious of needing time to write his poetry; when twenty-one, he wrote,

Oh, for ten years that I may overwhelm

Myself in poesy.

By age twenty-four--only three years later, he had essentially stopped writing because of ill health. There were times he felt confident that his poetry would survive him, "I think I shall be among the English Poets after my death." Nevertheless, the inscription he wrote for his headstone was, "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

Supports for Learning:

- Word Study:
 1. **Glean** (*verb*): to gather information or material piece by piece
 2. High-Piled: Here, the accent above the e is called a "grave accent" and is used to signify that the poet intends for the vowel to be pronounced, so as to maintain a certain meter.
 3. **Charactery** (*noun*): an expression of thought through symbols or characters
 4. Garers: Storage
- While reading think about:
 - What is the speaker in the poem thinking about?
 - How does love and the fear of dying relate to each other?

Online Resources for Students:

Video:

[What is the Greatest Honor?](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P85Fj8m6v84>

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Tic-Tac-Toe Choice Board: *When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be*

Directions: Read *When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be*. Choose **4** activities from the choice board below. You should complete at least two activities from each **row**.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">R O W 1</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 1</p> <p>Write an informational essay explaining how the structure of the poem contributes to the overall meaning of the poem. Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 2</p> <p>Expansion Activity: Transform the poem into a narrative essay detailing how love and death are connected.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 3</p> <p>Word Study: Review the critical vocabulary from the text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write a sentence for each of the identified words listed under word study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The sentences are to be grade appropriate and use at least eight words in each sentence |
| <p style="text-align: center;">R O W 2</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 4</p> <p>Make a connection: Write an informational essay highlighting the similarities and differences between <i>When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be</i> and <i>The Devil</i>.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 5</p> <p>Create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting Keats's view on death in the poem <i>When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be</i> and the son's view on death in <i>The Devil</i>.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 6</p> <p>Questions Connections: Create and answer ten questions connected to the poem. The questions should provide others with key information connected to the theme of the poem.</p> |

Lesson Five and Six

Focus: *A Dead Woman's Secret*

By Guy de Maupassante

Guy de Maupassant (1850-1893) was a popular French writer during the 19th century and is considered one of the fathers of the modern short story in Western literature. In the following story, a brother and sister mourn the passing of their beloved mother. As you read, take notes on how de Maupassant's use of irony contributes to the plot of the story.



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[1]

She had died painlessly, tranquilly, like a woman whose life was irreproachable,¹ and she now lay on her back in bed, with closed eyes, calm features, her long white hair carefully arranged, as if she had again made her toilet² ten minutes before her death. Her pale physiognomy³ was so composed now that she had passed away, so resigned, that one felt sure a sweet soul had dwelt in that body, that this serene grandmother had spent an untroubled existence, that this virtuous woman had ended her life without any shock, without any remorse.

On his knees beside the bed, her son, a magistrate⁴ of inflexible principles, and her daughter Marguerite – in religion, Sister Eulalie – were weeping distractedly. She had from the time of their infancy armed them with an inflexible code of morality, teaching them a religion without weakness and a sense of duty without any compromise. He, the son, had become a magistrate and, wielding the weapon of the law, struck down without pity the feeble and the erring. She, the daughter, quite penetrated with the virtue that had bathed her in this austere family, had become the spouse of God through disgust with men.

They had scarcely known their father; all they knew was that he had made their mother unhappy without learning any further details. The nun passionately kissed one hand of her dead mother, which hung down, a hand of ivory like that of Christ in the large crucifix which lay on the bed. At the opposite side of the prostrate body the other hand seemed still to grasp the rumpled sheet with that wondering movement which is called the fold of the dying, and the lines had retained little creases as a memento of those last motions which precede the eternal motionlessness. A few light taps at the door caused the two sobbing heads to look up, and the priest, who had just dined, entered the apartment. He was flushed, a little puffed from the effects of the process of digestion which had just commenced, for he had put a good dash of brandy into his coffee in order to counteract the fatigue caused by the last nights he had remained up and that which he anticipated

from the night that was still in store for him. He had put on a look of sadness, that simulated sadness of the priest to whom death is a means of livelihood. He made the sign of the cross and, coming over to them with his professional gesture, said:

“Well, my poor children, I have come to help you to pass these mournful hours.”

[5]

But Sister Eulalie suddenly rose up.

“Thanks, Father, but my brother and I would like to be left alone with her. These are the last moments that we now have for seeing her, so we want to feel ourselves once more, the three of us, just as we were years ago when we — we — we were only children and our poor — poor mother — ” She was unable to finish with the flood of tears that gushed from her eyes and the sobs that were choking her.

But the priest bowed with a more serene look on his face, for he was thinking of his bed. “Just as you please, my children.”

Then he kneeled down, again crossed himself, prayed, rose and softly stole away, murmuring as he went: “She was a saint.”

They were left alone, the dead woman and her children. A hidden timepiece kept regularly ticking in its dark corner, and through the open window the soft odors of hay and of woods penetrated with faint gleams of moonlight. No sound in the fields outside, save the wandering croak of toads and now and then the humming of some nocturnal insect darting in like a ball and knocking itself against the wall.

[10]

An infinite peace, a divine melancholy, a silent serenity surrounded this dead woman, seemed to emanate from her, to evaporate from her into the atmosphere outside and to calm Nature herself.

Then the magistrate, still on his knees, his head pressed against the bedclothes, in a far-off, heartbroken voice that pierced through the sheets and the coverlet, exclaimed:

“Mamma, Mamma, Mamma!” And the sister, sinking down on the floor, striking the wood with her forehead fanatically, twisting herself about and quivering like a person in an epileptic fit, groaned: “Jesus, Jesus — Mamma — Jesus!”

And both of them, shaken by a hurricane of grief, panted with a rattling in their throats.

Then the fit gradually subsided, and they now wept in a less violent fashion, like the rainy calm that follows a squall on a storm-beaten sea. Then after some time they rose and fixed their glances on the beloved corpse. And memories, those memories of the past, so sweet, so torturing today, came back to their minds with all those little forgotten details, those little details so intimate and familiar, which made the being who is no more live over again. They recalled circumstances, words, smiles, certain intonations of voice which belonged to one whom they should never hear speaking to them again. They saw her once more happy and calm, and phrases she used in ordinary conversation rose to their lips. They even remembered a little movement of the hand, peculiar to her, as if she were keeping time when she was saying something of importance.

[15]

And they loved her as they had never before loved her. And by the depth of their despair they realized how strongly they had been attached to her and how desolate they would find themselves now.

She had been their mainstay, their guide, the best part of their youth, of that happy portion of their lives which had vanished; she had been the bond that united them to existence, the mother, the mamma, the creative flesh, the tie that bound them to their ancestors. They would henceforth be solitary, isolated; they would have nothing on earth to look back upon.

The nun said to her brother:

“You know how Mamma used always to read over her old letters. They are all there in her desk. Suppose we read them in our turn and so revive all her life this night by her side. It would be like a kind of road of the cross, like making the acquaintance of her mother, of grandparents whom we never knew, whose letters are there and of whom she has so often talked to us; you remember?”

And they drew forth from the drawer a dozen little packets of yellow paper, carefully tied up and placed close to one another. They flung these relics on the bed and, selecting one of them on which the word “Father” was written, they opened and read what was in it.

[20]

It consisted of those very old letters which are to be found in old family writing desks, those letters which have the flavor of another century. The first said, “My darling”; another, “My beautiful little

girl"; then others, "My dear child"; and then again, "My dear daughter." And suddenly the nun began reading aloud, reading for the dead her own history, all her tender souvenirs.⁶ And the magistrate listened, while he leaned on the bed with his eyes on his mother's face. And the motionless corpse seemed happy.

Sister Eulalie, interrupting herself, said: "We ought to put them into the grave with her, to make a winding sheet of them and bury them with her."

And then she took up another packet on which the descriptive word did not appear.

And in a loud tone she began:

"My adored one, I love you to distraction. Since yesterday I have been suffering like a damned soul burned by the recollection of you. I feel your lips on mine, your eyes under my eyes, your flesh under my flesh. I love you! I love you! You have made me mad! My arms open! I pant with an immense desire to possess you again. My whole body calls out to you, wants you. I have kept in my mouth the taste of your kisses."

[25]

The magistrate rose up; the nun stopped reading. He snatched the letter from her and sought for the signature. There was none, save under the words, "He who adores you," the name "Henry." Their father's name was René. So then he was not the man.

Then the son, with rapid fingers, fumbled in the packet of letters, took another of them and read:

"I can do without your caresses no longer."

And standing up with the severity of a judge passing sentence, he gazed at the impassive face of the dead woman.

The nun, straight as a statue, with teardrops standing at each corner of her eyes, looked at her brother, waiting to see what he meant to do. Then he crossed the room, slowly reached the window and looked out thoughtfully into the night.

[30]

When he turned back sister Eulalie, her eyes quite dry, still remained standing near the bed with a downcast look.

He went over to the drawer and flung in the letters which he had picked up from the floor. Then he

drew the curtain round the bed.

And when the dawn made the candles on the table look pale the son rose from his armchair and, without even a parting glance at the mother whom he had separated from them and condemned, he said slowly:

“Now, my sister, let us leave the room.”

"A Dead Woman's Secret" by Guy de Maupassant (1880) is in the public domain

What Students are Learning:

Students will read the fictional story, *A Dead Woman's Secret*. Students will understand the themes Death and Identity as they relate to the text. Students will examine and attempt to answer the questions: “How do people face death” and “can you change your identity?”

Standards Work:

Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the themes; provide an objective summary of the text.

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

Evaluate how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college- and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of literature that reflect a variety of genres in the respective major periods of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

Background and Context:

"The Dead Woman's Secret" is a short story by the French writer Guy de Maupassant. As suggested by the title, is about two adult children who found out that their mother had had an affair only after the mother's death.

Supports for Learning:

- Word Study:
 1. **Irreproachable** (*adjective*) : faultless; beyond criticism
 2. Toilet: "To make one's toilet" is an old phrase that refers to the act or process of grooming oneself.
 3. Physiognomy refers to a character's facial expression or to an inner quality that is revealed through their facial expressions.
 4. A magistrate is a civil officer or judge who administers the law, especially when dealing with minor offenses.
 5. **Squall** (*adjective*) : a violent gust of wind, often in a storm bringing sleet, rain, or snow
 6. "Souvenirs" is from the French word that means "memories."

- While reading think about:
 - How do people face death?
 - In the context of this text, how is concept of identity created and/or destroyed?
 - How are character's points of view developed?

Online Resources for Students:

Video:

[I Thought I knew you](https://www.thisamericanlife.org/578/i-thought-i-knew-you)
<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/578/i-thought-i-knew-you>

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Directions: Read *A Dead Woman's Secret*. Choose **4** activities from the choice board below. You should complete at least two activities from each **row**.

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>R O w 1</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 1</p> <p>Based on your reading of the text, write an informational essay identifying the author's likely purpose in writing this story. Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 2</p> <p>Write a summary of the <i>A Dead Woman's Secret</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe in your summary how the judge's attitude towards his mother changed after the discovery of the letters. | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 3</p> <p>Word Study: Review the critical vocabulary from the text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a sentence for each of the identified words listed under word study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The sentences are to be grade appropriate and use at least eight words in each sentence |
| <p>R O w 2</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 4</p> <p>Make a connection: Write an informational essay highlighting the similarities and differences between the judge in <i>A Dead Woman's Secret</i> and the son in <i>The Devil</i>.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 5</p> <p>The characters in the story face conflict as a result of their mother's death. Write an essay detailing the conflict faced by two of the characters in the story.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 6</p> <p>Questions Connections: Create and answer ten questions connected to the text. The questions should provide others with key information connected to the theme of the text.</p> |

Focus: *The Bet*

By Anton Chekhov

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860 - 1904) was a Russian playwright and short story writer who is considered to be among the greatest writers of short fiction in history. This story begins when a lawyer and a banker make a bet. **As you read, take notes to track the changes you see in the lawyer and the banker over the course of the bet.**



"Untitled" by Andrew Ly is licensed under CC0.

[1]

It was a dark autumn night. The old banker was walking up and down his study and remembering how, fifteen years before, he had given a party one autumn evening. There had been many clever men there, and there had been interesting conversations. Among other things they had talked of capital punishment.¹ The majority of the guests, among whom were many journalists and intellectual men, disapproved of the death penalty. They considered that form of punishment out of date, immoral, and unsuitable for Christian States.² In the opinion of some of them the death penalty ought to be replaced everywhere by imprisonment for life. "I don't agree with you," said their host the banker. "I have not tried either the death penalty or imprisonment for life, but if one may judge *a priori*,³ the death penalty is more moral and more humane than imprisonment for life. Capital punishment kills a man at once, but lifelong imprisonment kills him slowly. Which executioner is the more humane,⁴ he who kills you in a few minutes or he who drags the life out of you in the course of many years?"

"Both are equally immoral," observed one of the guests, "for they both have the same object — to take away life. The State is not God. It has not the right to take away what it cannot restore when it wants to."

Among the guests was a young lawyer, a young man of five-and-twenty. When he was asked his opinion, he said:

“The death sentence and the life sentence are equally immoral,⁵ but if I had to choose between the death penalty and imprisonment for life, I would certainly choose the second. To live anyhow is better than not at all.”

[5]

A lively discussion arose. The banker, who was younger and more nervous in those days, was suddenly carried away by excitement; he struck the table with his fist and shouted at the young man:

“It’s not true! I’ll bet you two million you wouldn’t stay in solitary confinement for five years.”

“If you mean that in earnest,” said the young man, “I’ll take the bet, but I would stay not five but fifteen years.”

“Fifteen? Done!” cried the banker. “Gentlemen, I stake two million!”

“Agreed! You stake your millions and I stake my freedom!” said the young man.

[10]

And this wild, senseless bet was carried out! The banker, spoilt and frivolous,⁶ with millions beyond his reckoning, was delighted at the bet. At supper he made fun of the young man, and said:

“Think better of it, young man, while there is still time. To me two million is a trifle, but you are losing three or four of the best years of your life. I say three or four, because you won’t stay longer. Don’t forget either, you unhappy man, that voluntary confinement is a great deal harder to bear than compulsory.⁷ The thought that you have the right to step out in liberty at any moment will poison your whole existence in prison. I am sorry for you.”

And now the banker, walking to and fro, remembered all this, and asked himself: “What was the object of that bet? What is the good of that man’s losing fifteen years of his life and my throwing away two million? Can it prove that the death penalty is better or worse than imprisonment for life? No, no. It was all nonsensical and meaningless. On my part it was the caprice⁸ of a pampered man, and on his part simple greed for money...”

Then he remembered what followed that evening. It was decided that the young man should spend the years of his captivity under the strictest supervision in one of the lodges in the banker's garden. It was agreed that for fifteen years he should not be free to cross the threshold of the lodge, to see human beings, to hear the human voice, or to receive letters and newspapers. He was allowed to have a musical instrument and books, and was allowed to write letters, to drink wine, and to smoke. By the terms of the agreement, the only relations he could have with the outer world were by a little window made purposely for that object. He might have anything he wanted – books, music, wine, and so on – in any quantity he desired by writing an order, but could only receive them through the window. The agreement provided for every detail and every trifle that would make his imprisonment strictly solitary, and bound the young man to stay there *exactly* fifteen years, beginning from twelve o'clock of November 14, 1870, and ending at twelve o'clock of November 14, 1885. The slightest attempt on his part to break the conditions, if only two minutes before the end, released the banker from the obligation to pay him the two million.

For the first year of his confinement, as far as one could judge from his brief notes, the prisoner suffered severely from loneliness and depression. The sounds of the piano could be heard continually day and night from his lodge. He refused wine and tobacco. Wine, he wrote, excites the desires, and desires are the worst foes of the prisoner; and besides, nothing could be more dreary than drinking good wine and seeing no one. And tobacco spoilt the air of his room. In the first year the books he sent for were principally of a light character: novels with a complicated love plot, sensational and fantastic stories, and so on.

[15]

In the second year the piano was silent in the lodge, and the prisoner asked only for the classics. In the fifth year music was audible again, and the prisoner asked for wine. Those who watched him through the window said that all that year he spent doing nothing but eating and drinking and lying on his bed, frequently yawning and angrily talking to himself. He did not read books. Sometimes at night he would sit down to write; he would spend hours writing, and in the morning tear up all that he had written. More than once he could be heard crying.

In the second half of the sixth year the prisoner began zealously studying languages, philosophy, and history. He threw himself eagerly into these studies – so much so that the banker had enough to do to get him the books he ordered. In the course of four years some six hundred volumes were procured¹⁰ at his request. It was during this period that the banker received the following letter from his prisoner:

“My dear Jailer, I write you these lines in six languages. Show them to people who know the languages. Let them read them. If they find not one mistake I implore you to fire a shot in the garden. That shot will show me that my efforts have not been thrown away. The geniuses of all ages and of all lands speak different languages, but the same flame burns in them all. Oh, if you only knew what unearthly happiness my soul feels now from being able to understand them!” The prisoner’s desire was fulfilled. The banker ordered two shots to be fired in the garden.

Then after the tenth year, the prisoner sat immovably at the table and read nothing but the Gospel. It seemed strange to the banker that a man who in four years had mastered six hundred learned volumes should waste nearly a year over one thin book easy of comprehension. Theology¹¹ and histories of religion followed the Gospels.¹²

In the last two years of his confinement the prisoner read an immense quantity of books quite indiscriminately. At one time he was busy with the natural sciences, then he would ask for Byron or Shakespeare. There were notes in which he demanded at the same time books on chemistry, and a manual of medicine, and a novel, and some treatise on philosophy or theology. His reading suggested a man swimming in the sea among the wreckage of his ship, and trying to save his life by greedily clutching first at one spar and then at another.

[20]

The old banker remembered all this, and thought:

“To-morrow at twelve o’clock he will regain his freedom. By our agreement I ought to pay him two million. If I do pay him, it is all over with me: I shall be utterly ruined.”

Fifteen years before, his millions had been beyond his reckoning; now he was afraid to ask himself which were greater, his debts or his assets. Desperate gambling on the Stock Exchange, wild speculation and the excitability which he could not get over even in advancing years, had by degrees led to the decline of his fortune and the proud, fearless, self-confident millionaire had become a banker of middling rank, trembling at every rise and fall in his investments. "Cursed bet!" muttered the old man, clutching his head in despair. "Why didn't the man die? He is only forty now. He will take my last penny from me, he will marry, will enjoy life, will gamble on the Exchange; while I shall look at him with envy like a beggar, and hear from him every day the same sentence: 'I am indebted to you for the happiness of my life, let me help you!' No, it is too much! The one means of being saved from bankruptcy and disgrace is the death of that man!"

It struck three o'clock, the banker listened; everyone was asleep in the house and nothing could be heard outside but the rustling of the chilled trees. Trying to make no noise, he took from a fireproof safe the key of the door which had not been opened for fifteen years, put on his overcoat, and went out of the house.

It was dark and cold in the garden. Rain was falling. A damp cutting wind was racing about the garden, howling and giving the trees no rest. The banker strained his eyes, but could see neither the earth nor the white statues, nor the lodge, nor the trees. Going to the spot where the lodge stood, he twice called the watchman. No answer followed. Evidently the watchman had sought shelter from the weather, and was now asleep somewhere either in the kitchen or in the greenhouse.

[25]

"If I had the pluck to carry out my intention," thought the old man, "suspicion would fall first upon the watchman."

He felt in the darkness for the steps and the door, and went into the entry of the lodge. Then he groped his way into a little passage and lighted a match. There was not a soul there. There was a bedstead with no bedding on it, and in the corner there was a dark cast-iron stove. The seals on the door leading to the prisoner's rooms were intact.

When the match went out the old man, trembling with emotion, peeped through the little window. A candle was burning dimly in the prisoner's room. He was sitting at the table. Nothing could be seen but his back, the hair on his head, and his hands. Open books were lying on the table, on the two easy-chairs, and on the carpet near the table.

Five minutes passed and the prisoner did not once stir. Fifteen years' imprisonment had taught him to sit still. The banker tapped at the window with his finger, and the prisoner made no movement whatever in response. Then the banker cautiously broke the seals off the door and put the key in the keyhole. The rusty lock gave a grating sound and the door creaked. The banker expected to hear at once footsteps and a cry of astonishment, but three minutes passed and it was as quiet as ever in the room. He made up his mind to go in.

At the table a man unlike ordinary people was sitting motionless. He was a skeleton with the skin drawn tight over his bones, with long curls like a woman's and a shaggy beard. His face was yellow with an earthy tint in it, his cheeks were hollow, his back long and narrow, and the hand on which his shaggy head was propped was so thin and delicate that it was dreadful to look at it. His hair was already streaked with silver, and seeing his emaciated, ¹⁴aged-looking face, no one would have believed that he was only forty. He was asleep... In front of his bowed head there lay on the table a sheet of paper on which there was something written in fine handwriting.

[30]

"Poor creature!" thought the banker, "he is asleep and most likely dreaming of the millions. And I have only to take this half-dead man, throw him on the bed, stifle him a little with the pillow, and the most conscientious expert would find no sign of a violent death. But let us first read what he has written here ..."

The banker took the page from the table and read as follows:

"To-morrow at twelve o'clock I regain my freedom and the right to associate with other men, but before I leave this room and see the sunshine, I think it necessary to say a few words to you. With a clear conscience I tell you, as before God, who beholds me, that I despise freedom and life and health, and all that in your books is called the good things of the world.

“For fifteen years I have been intently studying earthly life. It is true I have not seen the earth nor men, but in your books I have drunk fragrant wine, I have sung songs, I have hunted stags and wild boars in the forests, have loved women... Beauties as ethereal¹⁵ as clouds, created by the magic of your poets and geniuses, have visited me at night, and have whispered in my ears wonderful tales that have set my brain in a whirl. In your books I have climbed to the peaks of Elburz and Mont Blanc, and from there I have seen the sun rise and have watched it at evening flood the sky, the ocean, and the mountain-tops with gold and crimson. I have watched from there the lightning flashing over my head and cleaving the storm-clouds. I have seen green forests, fields, rivers, lakes, towns. I have heard the singing of the sirens, and the strains of the shepherds’ pipes; I have touched the wings of comely¹⁶ devils who flew down to converse with me of God... In your books I have flung myself into the bottomless pit, performed miracles, slain, burned towns, preached new religions, conquered whole kingdoms...

“Your books have given me wisdom. All that the unresting thought of man has created in the ages is compressed into a small compass in my brain. I know that I am wiser than all of you.

[35]

“And I despise your books, I despise wisdom and the blessings of this world. It is all worthless, fleeting, illusory,¹⁷ and deceptive, like a mirage. You may be proud, wise, and fine, but death will wipe you off the face of the earth as though you were no more than mice burrowing under the floor, and your posterity, your history, your immortal geniuses will burn or freeze together with the earthly globe.

“You have lost your reason and taken the wrong path. You have taken lies for truth, and hideousness for beauty. You would marvel if, owing to strange events of some sort, frogs and lizards suddenly grew on apple and orange trees instead of fruit, or if roses began to smell like a sweating horse; so I marvel at you who exchange heaven for earth. I don’t want to understand you.

“To prove to you in action how I despise all that you live by, I renounce the two million of which I once dreamed as of paradise and which now I despise. To deprive myself of the right to the money I shall go out from here five hours before the time fixed, and so break the compact...”

When the banker had read this he laid the page on the table, kissed the strange man on the head, and went out of the lodge, weeping. At no other time, even when he had lost heavily on the Stock Exchange, had he felt so great a contempt¹⁸ for himself. When he got home he lay on his bed, but his tears and emotion kept him for hours from sleeping.

Next morning the watchmen ran in with pale faces, and told him they had seen the man who lived in the lodge climb out of the window into the garden, go to the gate, and disappear. The banker went at once with the servants to the lodge and made sure of the flight of his prisoner. To avoid arousing unnecessary talk, he took from the table the writing in which the millions were renounced, and when he got home locked it up in the fireproof safe.

“The Bet” by Anton Chekhov is in the public domain.

What Students are Learning:

Students are reading the fictional story, *The Bet*. Students will understand the themes of Loneliness and Isolation, and Power and Greed as they relate to the text. Students will examine and attempt to answer the questions: “Does money buy happiness?” and “What does it mean to feel alone?”

Standards Work:

Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the themes; provide an objective summary of the text.

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author’s implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

Evaluate how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college- and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of literature that reflect a variety of genres in the respective major periods of literature, including how two or more texts from the same

period treat similar themes or topics.

Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

Background and Context:

"The Bet" (Russian: "Пари", romanized: *Pari*) is an 1889 short story by Anton Chekhov about a banker and a young lawyer who make a bet with each other following a conversation about whether the death penalty is better or worse than life in prison. The banker wagers that the lawyer cannot remain in solitary confinement voluntarily for a period of fifteen years.

Supports for Learning:

- **Word Study:**

1. Capital punishment, also known as the death penalty, is a practice whereby a person is put to death by the state as punishment for a crime.
2. A Christian State recognizes Christianity as its official religion.
3. The Latin phrase "a priori" refers to knowledge that does not come from actual experience but rather from deduction or theoretical reasoning.
4. **Humane** (*adjective*): having sympathy and compassion for other people
5. **Immoral** (*adjective*): going against what is right, proper, or good
6. **Frivolous** (*adjective*): not serious in attitude or behavior; not able to think ahead
7. **Compulsory** (*adjective*): required; mandatory
8. **Caprice** (*noun*): a sudden, unpredictable action
9. **Trifle** (*noun*): something of little value, substance, or importance
10. **Procure** (*verb*): to get possession of; to obtain by a particular care and effort
11. Theology is the study of religious faith, practice, and experience.
12. Gospels are books written about the life of Jesus.
13. Stock Exchange refers to a place where people buy and sell stocks, which are the ownership elements of a corporation.
14. **Emaciate** (*verb*): to cause someone to become very thin
15. **Ethereal** (*adjective*): of or relating to the heavens
16. **Comely** (*adjective*): pretty, attractive
17. **Illusory** (*adjective*): based on or producing an illusion; deceptive
18. **Contempt** (*noun*): a feeling that someone or something is not worthy of respect or approval

- **While reading think about:**

- How does the bet impact the theme of the story?
- How do the characters develop over the course of the story?
- How are the lawyer's and the banker's point of view different/similar?

Online Resources for Students:

Video:

[Stories of Life in Solitary Confinement](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7ajzsh-i54)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q7ajzsh-i54>

[The Bet](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90g2vHbFO6w)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90g2vHbFO6w>

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When you access this link from home you will need to log in with the barcode number on your library card. If you do not have a library card, click on the link that reads: Apply for an e-card now. You will need to enter your email and zip code. You will receive a login to Powerlibrary.

Tic-Tac-Toe Choice Board: *The Bet*

Directions: Read *The Bet*. Choose **4** activities from the choice board below. You should complete at least two activities from each **row**.

| | Activity 1 | Activity 2 | Activity 3 |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| R o w 1 | Based on your reading, of the text, write an informational essay identifying the author's likely purpose in writing <i>The Bet</i> . Cite evidence from the text to support your answer. | Write a summary of the <i>The Bet</i> . <ul style="list-style-type: none">Describe in your summary how geography or location played a part in the formation and success of the Harappan civilization. | Word Study: Review the critical vocabulary from the text <ul style="list-style-type: none">Write a sentence for each of the identified words listed under word study.<ul style="list-style-type: none">The sentences are to be grade appropriate and use at least eight words in each sentence |

| | Activity 4 | Activity 5 | Activity 6 |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| R o w 2 | Make a connection: Write an informational essay comparing and contrasting the agreements the characters in <i>The Bet</i> made and the agreements the characters in <i>The Devil</i> made. Cite evidence from the text to support your claims. | Make a connection: Write an informational essay detailing how greed impacts the characters in <i>The Bet</i> and in <i>The Devil</i> . Cite evidence from the text to support your claims. | Questions Connections: Create and answer ten questions connected to the text. The questions should provide others with key information and details from the text. |

Lesson Nine and Ten

Focus: *The Treasure in the Forest*

By H.G. Wells

Herbert George Wells (1866-1946) was a British author and father of the science fiction genre, best known for his novel *The Time Machine*. In this story, two men search for Spanish treasure, letting greed get the better of their awareness. As you read, take notes on what drives the men to find this treasure, as well as how the author uses symbols to foreshadow potential tragedy.



"Gold Bar with Reflected Coins" by Bullion Vault is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0.

[1]

The canoe was now approaching the land. The bay opened out, and a gap in the white surf of the reef marked where the little river ran out to the sea; the thicker and deeper green of the virgin forest showed its course down the distant hill slope. The forest here came close to the beach. Far beyond, dim and almost cloudlike in texture, rose the mountains, like suddenly frozen waves. The sea was still save for an almost imperceptible swell. The sky blazed.

The man with the carved paddle stopped. "It should be somewhere here," he said. He shipped¹ the paddle and held his arms out straight before him.

The other man had been in the fore² part of the canoe, closely scrutinising the land. He had a sheet of yellow paper on his knee.

"Come and look at this, Evans," he said.

[5]

Both men spoke in low tones, and their lips were hard and dry.

The man called Evans came swaying along the canoe until he could look over his companion's shoulder.

The paper had the appearance of a rough map. By much folding it was creased and worn to the pitch of separation, and the second man held the discoloured fragments together where they had parted. On it one could dimly make out, in almost obliterated pencil, the outline of the bay.

"Here," said Evans, "is the reef, and here is the gap." He ran his thumb-nail over the chart.

"This curved and twisting line is the river—I could do with a drink now!—and this star is the place."

[10]

"You see this dotted line," said the man with the map; "it is a straight line, and runs from the opening of the reef to a clump of palm-trees. The star comes just where it cuts the river. We must mark the place as we go into the lagoon."

"It's queer,"³ said Evans, after a pause, "what these little marks down here are for. It looks like the plan of a house or something; but what all these little dashes, pointing this way and that, may mean I can't get a notion. And what's the writing?"

"Chinese," said the man with the map.

"Of course! He was a Chinese," said Evans.

"They all were," said the man with the map.

[15]

They both sat for some minutes staring at the land, while the canoe drifted slowly. Then Evans looked towards the paddle.

“Your turn with the paddle now, Hooker,” said he.

And his companion quietly folded up his map, put it in his pocket, passed Evans carefully, and began to paddle. His movements were languid, like those of a man whose strength was nearly exhausted.

Evans sat with his eyes half closed, watching the frothy breakwater of the coral creep nearer and nearer. The sky was like a furnace, for the sun was near the zenith.⁴ Though they were so near the Treasure he did not feel the exaltation⁵ he had anticipated. The intense excitement of the struggle for the plan, and the long night voyage from the mainland in the unprovisioned canoe had, to use his own expression, “taken it out of him.” He tried to arouse himself by directing his mind to the ingots⁶ the Asian⁷ had spoken of, but it would not rest there; it came back headlong to the thought of sweet water rippling in the river, and to the almost unendurable dryness of his lips and throat. The rhythmic wash of the sea upon the reef was becoming audible now, and it had a pleasant sound in his ears; the water washed along the side of the canoe, and the paddle dripped between each stroke. Presently he began to doze.

He was still dimly conscious of the island, but a queer dream texture interwove with his sensations. Once again it was the night when he and Hooker had hit upon the Chinamen's secret; he saw the moonlit trees, the little fire burning, and the black figures of the three Chinamen—silvered on one side by moonlight, and on the other glowing from the firelight—and heard them talking together in pigeon-English⁸—for they came from different provinces. Hooker had caught the drift of their talk first, and had motioned to him to listen. Fragments of the conversation were inaudible, and fragments incomprehensible. A Spanish galleon⁹ from the Philippines hopelessly aground, and its treasure buried against the day of return, lay in the background of the story; a shipwrecked crew thinned by disease, a quarrel or so, and the needs of discipline, and at last taking to their boats never to be heard of again. Then Chang-hi, only a year since, wandering ashore, had happened upon the ingots hidden for two hundred years, had deserted his junk, and reburied them with infinite toil, single-handed but very safe. He laid great stress on the safety—it was a secret of his. Now he wanted help to return and exhume¹⁰ them. Presently the little map fluttered and the voices sank. A fine story for two, stranded British wastrels¹¹ to hear! Evans' dream shifted to the moment when he had Chang-hi's pigtail in his hand. The life of a Chinaman is scarcely sacred like a European's. The cunning little face of Chang-hi, first keen and furious like a startled snake, and then fearful, treacherous, and pitiful, became overwhelmingly prominent in the dream. At the end Chang-hi had grinned, a most incomprehensible and startling grin. Abruptly things became very unpleasant, as they will do at times in dreams. Chang-hi gibbered and threatened him. He saw in his dream heaps and heaps of gold, and Chang-hi intervening and struggling to hold him back from it. He took Chang-hi by the pig-tail, and how he struggled and grinned! He kept growing bigger, too. Then the bright heaps of gold turned to a roaring furnace, and a vast devil, surprisingly like Chang-hi, but with a huge black tail, began to feed him with coals. They burnt his mouth horribly. Another devil was shouting his name: "Evans, Evans, you sleepy fool!"—or was it Hooker?

[20]

He woke up. They were in the mouth of the lagoon.

"There are the three palm-trees. It must be in a line with that clump of bushes," said his companion.

"Mark that. If we, go to those bushes and then strike into the bush in a straight line from here, we shall come to it when we come to the stream."

They could see now where the mouth of the stream opened out. At the sight of it Evans revived. "Hurry up, man," he said, "or by heaven I shall have to drink sea water!" He gnawed his hand and stared at the gleam of silver among the rocks and green tangle.

Presently he turned almost fiercely upon Hooker. "Give me the paddle," he said.

So they reached the river mouth. A little way up Hooker took some water in the hollow of his hand, tasted it, and spat it out. A little further he tried again. "This will do," he said, and they began drinking eagerly.

[25]

"Curse this!" said Evans suddenly. "It's too slow." And, leaning dangerously over the fore part of the canoe, he began to suck up the water with his lips.

Presently they made an end of drinking, and, running the canoe into a little creek, were about to land among the thick growth that overhung the water.

"We shall have to scramble through this to the beach to find our bushes and get the line to the place," said Evans.

"We had better paddle round," said Hooker.

So they pushed out again into the river and paddled back down it to the sea, and along the shore to the place where the clump of bushes grew. Here they landed, pulled the light canoe far up the beach, and then went up towards the edge of the jungle until they could see the opening of the reef and the bushes in a straight line. Evans had taken a native implement out of the canoe. It was L-shaped, and the transverse piece was armed with polished stone. Hooker carried the paddle. "It is straight now in this direction," said he; "we must push through this till we strike the stream. Then we must prospect."¹²

[30]

They pushed through a close tangle of reeds, broad fronds, and young trees, and at first it was toilsome going, but very speedily the trees became larger and the ground beneath them opened out. The blaze of the sunlight was replaced by insensible degrees by cool shadow. The trees became at last vast pillars that rose up to a canopy of greenery far overhead. Dim white flowers hung from their stems, and ropy creepers swung from tree to tree. The shadow deepened. On the ground, blotched fungi and a red-brown incrustation became frequent.

Evans shivered. "It seems almost cold here after the blaze outside."

"I hope we are keeping to the straight," said Hooker.

Presently they saw, far ahead, a gap in the somber darkness where white shafts of hot sunlight smote into the forest. There also was brilliant green undergrowth and coloured flowers. Then they heard the rush of water.

"Here is the river. We should be close to it now," said Hooker.

[35]

The vegetation was thick by the river bank. Great plants, as yet unnamed, grew among the roots of the big trees, and spread rosettes of huge green fans towards the strip of sky. Many flowers and a creeper with shiny foliage clung to the exposed stems. On the water of the broad, quiet pool which the treasure-seekers now overlooked there floated big oval leaves and a waxen, pinkish-white flower not unlike a water-lily. Further, as the river bent away from them, the water suddenly frothed and became noisy in a rapid.

"Well?" said Evans.

"We have swerved a little from the straight," said Hooker. "That was to be expected."

He turned and looked into the dim cool shadows of the silent forest behind them. "If we beat a little way up and down the stream we should come to something."

"You said—" began Evans.

[40]

"He said there was a heap of stones," said Hooker.

The two men looked at each other for a moment.

"Let us try a little down-stream first," said Evans.

They advanced slowly, looking curiously about them. Suddenly Evans stopped. "What the devil's that?" he said.

Hooker followed his finger. "Something blue," he said. It had come into view as they topped a gentle swell of the ground. Then he began to distinguish what it was.

[45]

He advanced suddenly with hasty¹³ steps, until the body that belonged to the limp hand and arm had become visible. His grip tightened on the implement he carried. The thing was the figure of a Chinaman lying on his face. The abandon of the pose was unmistakable.

The two men drew closer together, and stood staring silently at this ominous¹⁴ dead body. It lay in a clear space among the trees. Nearby was a spade after the Chinese pattern, and further off lay a scattered heap of stones, close to a freshly dug hole.

"Somebody has been here before," said Hooker, clearing his throat.

Then suddenly Evans began to swear and rave, and stamp upon the ground.

Hooker turned white but said nothing. He advanced towards the prostrate¹⁵ body. He saw the neck was puffed and purple, and the hands and ankles swollen. "Pah!" he said, and suddenly turned away and went towards the excavation. He gave a cry of surprise. He shouted to Evans, who was following him slowly.

[50]

"You fool! It's all right. It's here still." Then he turned again and looked at the dead Chinaman, and then again at the hole.

Evans hurried to the hole. Already half exposed by the ill-fated wretch beside them lay a number of dull yellow bars. He bent down in the hole, and, clearing off the soil with his bare hands, hastily pulled one of the heavy masses out. As he did so a little thorn pricked his hand. He pulled the delicate spike out with his fingers and lifted the ingot.

"Only gold or lead could weigh like this," he said exultantly.

Hooker was still looking at the dead Chinaman. He was puzzled.

"He stole a march¹⁶ on his friends," he said at last. "He came here alone, and some poisonous snake has killed him... I wonder how he found the place."

[55]

Evans stood with the ingot in his hands. What did a dead Chinaman signify? "We shall have to take this stuff to the mainland piecemeal,¹⁷ and bury it there for a while. How shall we get it to the canoe?"

He took his jacket off and spread it on the ground, and flung two or three ingots into it. Presently he found that another little thorn had punctured his skin.

"This is as much as we can carry," said he. Then suddenly, with a queer rush of irritation, "What are you staring at?"

Hooker turned to him. "I can't stand him ..." He nodded towards the corpse. "It's so like—"

"Rubbish!" said Evans. "All Chinamen are alike."

[60]

Hooker looked into his face. "I'm going to bury that, anyhow, before I lend a hand with this stuff."

"Don't be a fool, Hooker," said Evans, "Let that mass of corruption bide."

Hooker hesitated, and then his eye went carefully over the brown soil about them. "It scares me somehow," he said.

"The thing is," said Evans, "what to do with these ingots. Shall we re-bury them over here, or take them across the strait in the canoe?"

Hooker thought. His puzzled gaze wandered among the tall tree-trunks, and up into the remote sunlit greenery overhead. He shivered again as his eye rested upon the blue figure of the Chinaman. He stared searchingly among the grey depths between the trees.

[65]

"What's come to you, Hooker?" said Evans. "Have you lost your wits?"

"Let's get the gold out of this place, anyhow," said Hooker.

He took the ends of the collar of the coat in his hands, and Evans took the opposite corners, and they lifted the mass. "Which way?" said Evans. "To the canoe?"

"It's queer," said Evans, when they had advanced only a few steps, "but my arms ache still with that paddling."

“Curse it!” he said. “But they ache! I must rest.”

[70]

They let the coat down, Evans’ face was white, and little drops of sweat stood out upon his forehead. “It’s stuffy, somehow, in this forest.”

Then with an abrupt transition to unreasonable anger: “What is the good of waiting here all the day? Lend a hand, I say! You have done nothing but moon since we saw the dead Chinaman.”

Hooker was looking steadfastly at his companion’s face. He helped raise the coat bearing the ingots, and they went forward perhaps a hundred yards in silence. Evans began to breathe heavily. “Can’t you speak?” he said.

“What’s the matter with you?” said Hooker.

Evans stumbled, and then with a sudden curse flung the coat from him. He stood for a moment staring at Hooker, and then with a groan clutched at his own throat.

[75]

“Don’t come near me,” he said, and went and leant against a tree. Then in a steadier voice, “I’ll be better in a minute.”

Presently his grip upon the trunk loosened, and he slipped slowly down the stem of the tree until he was a crumpled heap at its foot. His hands were clenched convulsively. His face became distorted with pain. Hooker approached him.

“Don’t touch me! Don’t touch me!” said Evans in a stifled voice. “Put the gold back on the coat.”

“Can’t I do anything for you?” said Hooker.

“Put the gold back on the coat.”

[80]

As Hooker handled the ingots he felt a little prick on the ball of his thumb. He looked at his hand and saw a slender thorn, perhaps two inches in length.

Evans gave an inarticulate cry and rolled over.

Hooker's jaw dropped. He stared at the thorn for a moment with dilated eyes. Then he looked at Evans, who was now crumpled together on the ground, his back bending and straightening spasmodically. Then he looked through the pillars of the trees and net-work of creeper stems, to where in the dim grey shadow the blue-clad body of the Chinaman was still indistinctly visible. He thought of the little dashes in the corner of the plan, and in a moment he understood.

"God help me!" he said. For the thorns were similar to those the Dyaks¹⁸ poison and use in their blowing-tubes. He understood now what Chang-hi's assurance of the safety of his treasure meant. He understood that grin now.

"Evans!" he cried.

[85]

But Evans was silent and motionless, save for a horrible spasmodic twitching of his limbs. A profound silence brooded over the forest.

Then Hooker began to suck furiously at the little pink spot on the ball of his thumb—sucking for dear life. Presently he felt a strange aching pain in his arms and shoulders, and his fingers seemed difficult to bend. Then he knew that sucking was no good.

Abruptly he stopped, and sitting down by the pile of ingots, and resting his chin upon his hands and his elbows upon his knees, stared at the distorted but still quivering body of his companion. Chang-hi's grin came into his mind again. The dull pain spread towards his throat and grew slowly in intensity. Far above him a faint breeze stirred the greenery, and the white petals of some unknown flower came floating down through the gloom.

The Treasure in the Forest by H.G. Wells is in the public domain.

What Students are Learning:

Students are reading *The Treasure in the Forest*. Students will understand the themes of Power and Greed as it relates to the text. Students will examine and attempt to answer the question: "Does money buy happiness?"

Standards Work:

Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more themes or central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the themes; provide an objective summary of the text.

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama.

Evaluate how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college- and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of literature that reflect a variety of genres in the respective major periods of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics.

Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

Background and Context:

Herbert George Wells, more commonly known as H.G. Wells (September 21, 1866-August 13, 1946), was a prolific English author of fiction and non-fiction. Wells is best-remembered, however, for his famous science fiction novels and uncanny predictions about the future.

Wells long- and short-form fiction falls into many genres, including science-fiction, fantasy, dystopian fiction, satire, and tragedy. Wells penned plenty of non-fiction, including biographies, autobiographies, social commentaries, and textbooks as well as social commentary, history, biography, autobiography, and recreational war games.

Wells' 1895 debut, "The Time Machine," was followed by "The Island of Doctor Moreau" (1896), "The Invisible Man" (1897), and "The War of the Worlds" (1898). All four novels have been adapted for film, however, one of the most famous renditions of a Wells work was by Orson Welles, whose radio adaptation of "The War of the Worlds" was broadcast on October 30, 1938.

The reports that many listeners, not realizing what they were hearing was a radio play rather than a news broadcast and were so terrorized at the prospect of an alien invasion that they fled their homes in fear has since been debunked. However, the panic story was accepted for years and became one of the most enduring urban legends ever perpetrated in the name of a publicity campaign.

Supports for Learning:

- Word Study:

1. **Ship**: means to take oars/paddles (from the oarlocks) and lay them inside a boat.
2. **Fore** (*adjective*) : situated or placed in front
3. **Queer**: strange or odd
4. **Zenith** (*noun*) : highest point
5. **Exaltation** (*noun*) : a state of elation or joy
6. An **ingot** is a block of steel, gold, silver, or other metal, typically oblong in shape
7. **Asian**: a native of Asia or a person of Asian descent.
8. "**Pidgin**" is a grammatically simplified means of communication that develops between two or more groups that do not have a language in common.
9. A **galleon** is a heavy, square-rigged sailing ship of the 15th to early 18th centuries used for war or commerce, especially by the Spanish
10. **Exhume** (*verb*) : to dig out from the ground
11. **Wastrel** (*noun*) : vagabond
12. **Prospect** (*verb*) : to hunt or look for; to explore an area especially for mineral deposits
13. **Hasty** (*adjective*) : quick or hurried
14. **Ominous** (*adjective*) : suggesting that something bad is going to happen
15. **Prostrate** (*adjective*) : lying flat on the ground
16. "**To steal a march on**" means to precede someone with the same goal; to accomplish something before someone else does.
17. **Piecemeal** (*adjective*) : in pieces or fragments
18. **Dyaks**, a member of any of the several Indonesian peoples of the interior of Borneo.

- While reading think about:
 - How does foreshadowing contribute to the mood of the story?
 - How are money and happiness aligned in the context of the story?
 - How do the actions of the characters reveal their points of view?

Online Resources for Students:

Video:

[The Science of Greed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtU_nXV0i4E)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtU_nXV0i4E

[HG Wells Biography](https://www.biography.com/writer/hg-wells)

<https://www.biography.com/writer/hg-wells>

Power Library: is the online portal to all that Pennsylvania libraries offer. This is the place to find 24/7 access to newspapers, magazines, journals, historical documents and photos, online databases, and eBooks. Research a subject. Learn about your family history. Locate a

title. Explore career options. It's all here at POWER Library.

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When you access this link from home you will need to log in with the barcode number on your library card. If you do not have a library card, click on the link that reads: Apply for an e-card now. You will need to enter your email and zip code. You will receive a login to Powerlibrary.

Tic-Tac-Toe Choice Board: *The Treasure in the Forest*

Directions: Read *The Treasure in the Forest*. Choose **4** activities from the choice board below. You should complete at least two activities from each **row**.

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| R o w 1 | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 1</p> <p>Based on your reading of the text, write an informational essay identifying the author's likely purpose in writing <i>The Treasure in the Forest</i>. Cite evidence from the text to support your claim.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 2</p> <p>Write a summary of the <i>The Treasure in the Forest</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe in your summary how greed impacted the actions of the characters | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 3</p> <p>Word Study: Review the critical vocabulary from the text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write a sentence for each of the identified words listed under word study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The sentences are to be grade appropriate and use at least eight words in each sentence |
| R o w 2 | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 4</p> <p>Make a connection: Write an informational essay highlighting the similarities and differences between <i>The Treasure in the Forest</i> and <i>The Devil</i>. Cite evidence from the text to support your claims.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 5</p> <p>Based on your reading of the text, write an informational essay identifying how greed impacted the plot of <i>The Treasure in the Forest</i>. Cite evidence from the text to support your claim.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Activity 6</p> <p>Questions Connections: Create and answer ten questions connected to the text. The questions should provide others with key information connected to the text.</p> |

Rubrics

PENNSYLVANIA WRITING ASSESSMENT DOMAIN SCORING GUIDE

| | FOCUS | CONTENT | ORGANIZATION | STYLE | CONVENTIONS |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| | <i>The single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic.</i> | <i>The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons and/or explanations.</i> | <i>The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices including introduction and conclusion.</i> | <i>The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice.</i> | <i>The use of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.</i> |
| 4 | Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task (mode) | Substantial, specific and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas | Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions | Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience | Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation |
| 3 | Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task (mode) | Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation | Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions | Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience | Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation |
| 2 | No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic | Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation | Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition | Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone | Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation |
| 1 | Minimal evidence of a topic | Superficial and/or minimal content | Minimal control of content arrangement | Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures | Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation |

ENGLISH COMPOSITION CONVENTIONS SCORING GUIDELINES

| Scoring Domain | Score Point 4 At this score point, the writer— | Score Point 3 At this score point, the writer— | Score Point 2 At this score point, the writer— | Score Point 1 At this score point, the writer— | Score Point 0 At this score point, the writer— |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| Grammar and Usage | demonstrates command of standard English grammar and usage | demonstrates control of standard English grammar and usage | demonstrates limited or inconsistent control of standard English grammar and usage | demonstrates minimal control of standard English grammar and usage | demonstrates little or no control of standard English grammar and usage |
| Mechanics | demonstrates command of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling | demonstrates control of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling | demonstrates limited or inconsistent control of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling | demonstrates minimal control of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling | demonstrates little or no control of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling |
| Sentence Formation | demonstrates command of sentence formation | demonstrates control of sentence formation | demonstrates limited or inconsistent control of sentence formation | demonstrates minimal control of sentence formation | demonstrates little or no control of sentence formation |
| Summation | At this score point, the writer makes few errors, and errors do not interfere with reader understanding. | At this score point, the writer makes few errors, and errors seldom interfere with reader understanding. | At this score point, the writer makes errors, and errors may interfere with reader understanding. | At this score point, the writer makes errors, and errors often interfere with reader understanding. | At this score point, the writer makes errors, and errors consistently interfere with reader understanding. |